

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

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1. A method for providing a content tracking system comprising:
 - generating a tracking identifier;
 - incorporating the tracking identifier with content stored in a storage medium;
 - storing the tracking identifier in a database;
 - providing the storage medium to a primary distributor;
 - receiving information from the primary distributor;
 - associating within the database, in response to the receiving information from the primary distributor, the tracking identifier with the information from the primary distributor;
 - receiving information from a second level distributor;
 - associating within the database, in response to the receiving information from the second level distributor, the tracking identifier with the second level distributor; and
 - providing credit to the primary distributor and the second level distributor in response to a transaction derived from the content on the storage medium.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein the transaction derived from the content is selected from the group consisting of a sale, a lease, and a license.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein the incorporating step comprises incorporating the tracking identifier into a burst cut area of the

storage medium.

4. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
receiving information from a third level distributor;
5 associating within the database, in response to the receiving information from the third level distributor, the tracking identifier with the third level distributor, the second level distributor and the primary distributor; and
providing credit to the primary distributor, the second level distributor and the third level distributor in response to the transaction derived from the content on the storage medium.
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- 15 5. A method of tracking content comprising:
receiving a tracking identifier that identifies a particular copy of content on a storage medium;
placing the tracking identifier in a database;
receiving information from a primary distributor;
associating within the database, in response to the receiving information from the primary distributor, the tracking identifier with the information from the primary distributor;
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- 25 6. The method of claim 5 further comprising:
receiving information from a second level distributor; and
associating within the database, in response to the receiving information from the second level distributor, the tracking identifier with the second level distributor.
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7. The method of claim 6 wherein the transaction derived from the particular copy of content is selected from the group consisting of a sale, a lease, and a license.

5 8. The method of claim 5 further comprising:
 receiving information from a third level distributor; and
 associating within the database, in response to the receiving information from the third level distributor, the tracking identifier with the primary distributor, the second level distributor and the third level distributor.

10 15 9. The method of claim 8 further comprising:
 crediting the primary distributor, the second level distributor, and the third level distributor, in response to a transaction selected from the group consisting of a sale, a lease, and a license wherein the transaction is derived from the particular content on the storage medium.

20 25 10. A content tracking system comprising:
 a distributor network including a primary level distributor and a second level distributor for distributing content embodied in a storage medium;
 a server for receiving a tracking identifier that is incorporated with the content embodied in the storage medium and for receiving registration information from the primary level distributor and the second level distributor; and
 a database for associating the content with the primary level distributor and the second level distributor and for associating transactions derived from the content on the storage medium with the primary level distributor and the second level distributor.

11. The system of claim 10 wherein the primary level distributor and the second level distributor are distributors within a multi-level distributor network.

5 12. The system of claim 10 further comprising:
 a storage medium and tracking identifier integrator for incorporating the tracking identifier with the content embodied in the storage medium.

10 13. The system of claim 12 further comprising:
 a tracking identifier generator for generating the tracking identifier.

15 14. The system of claim 10 wherein transactions derived from the content on the storage medium are selected from the group consisting of a sale, a lease, and a license.

20 15. A system for tracking content comprising:
 means for receiving a tracking identifier that identifies a particular copy of media content;
 means for placing the tracking identifier in a database;
 means for receiving information from a primary distributor;
 means for associating within the database, in response to the receiving information from the primary distributor, the tracking identifier with the information from the primary distributor;

25 means for receiving information from a second level distributor;
 and
 means for associating within the tracking identifier database, in response to the receiving information from the second level distributor, the tracking identifier with the second level distributor.

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16. The system of claim 16 comprising means for providing credit to the primary distributor and the second level distributor for transactions derived from the content after being distributed by the second 5 level distributor.

17. The system of claim 16 wherein the transactions derived from the content are selected from the group consisting of a sale, a lease, and a license.

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18. The system of claim 15 comprising:
means for receiving information from a third level distributor;
and
means for associating within the tracking identifier database, in 15 response to the receiving information from the third level distributor, the tracking identifier with the third level distributor, the second level distributor and the primary distributor.

19. The system of claim 18 comprising means for providing credit to the primary distributor, the second level distributor, and the third 20 level distributor for transactions derived from the content after being distributed by the third level distributor.

20. The system of claim 19 wherein the transactions derived 25 from the content are selected from the group consisting of a sale, a lease, and a license.

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